

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-06 ACDA-10 NSC-05 PM-03
SP-02 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 MCE-00 /056 W
-----012059 170802Z /11
R 161603Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9774

S E C R E T TEGUCIGALPA 1331

LIMDIS

FOR ARA/DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ARELLANO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, OAS, HO, ES, IS
SUBJ: ISRAELI AIRCRAFT SALES TO HONDURAS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 691

1. AS YOU REQUESTED IN OUR RECENT CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON,
THE FOLLOWING IS A RECONSTRUCTION, BASED UPON EMBASSY FILES, OF
ISRAELI SUPER MYSTERE SALES TO HONDURAS:

--TEGUCIGALPA 3116 OF JUNE 23, 1976, DESCRIBED EMBASSY CONCERN
OVER IMBALANCE AMONG CENTRAL AMERICAN AIR FORCES CAUSED BY HON-
DURAN PURCHASE OF EIGHT SUPER MYSTERES FROM ISRAEL;

--TEGUCIGALPA 4882 OF OCTOBER 13, 1976, REPORTED THAT RELIABLE
SOURCES INDICATED THE GOH PLANNED TO PURCHASE AN ADDITIONAL
EIGHT SUPER MYSTERES;

--ALMOST ONE YEAR LATER, STATE 183137 OF AUGUST 4, 1977, TOLD
EMBASSY THAT USG HAD APPROVED AN ISRAELI
REQUEST TO TRANSFER TWO ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT (NUMBERS NINE AND
TEN AND ASKED EMBASSY TO COORDINATE WITH ISRAELI EMBASSY IN
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TEGUCIGALPA IN OBTAINING TRANSFER ASSURANCES FROM GOH. (COMMENT:
THIS WAS THE FIRST THAT EMBASSY KNEW OF GOI TRANSFER REQUEST.
EMBASSY WAS NOT ASKED TO COMMENT ON PROPOSED SALE, ALTHOUGH SALE
OF TWO MORE AIRCRAFT REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN
CENTRAL AMERICAN CONTEXT. AS THERE IS NO ISRAELI EMBASSY IN
TEGUCIGALPA, AND INASMUCH AS THE REQUEST HAD ALREADY BEEN
APPROVED, THE TEXT OF PROPOSED TRANSFER ASSURANCES WERE GIVEN

DIRECTLY TO GOH.); AND

--TEGUCIGALPA 4456 OF SEPTEMBER 22, 1977, TRANSMITTED TEXT OF GOH NOTE PROVIDING TRANSFER ASSURANCE TO USG FOR AIRCRAFT (NUMBERS NINE AND TEN).

2. THE EMBASSY THEN RECEIVED BY POUCH (IN LATE NOVEMBER AND EARLY DECEMBER 1977) COPIES OF MEMOS DESCRIBING PLANS FOR THE SALE BY THE GOI OF TWO ADDITIONAL SUPER MYSTERES (APPARENTLY NUMBERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE). AGAIN, THIS WAS THE FIRST INDICATION EMBASSY HAD OF ANOTHER SALE. FIRST MEMO WAS FROM ARA/TODMAN TO PM/GELB, DRAFTED OCTOBER 26, 1977 BY D.C. JOHNSON. SECOND MEMO WAS AN S/S ACTION MEMORANDUM DATED NOVEMBER 10, 1977, FROM PM, ARA AND NEA TO THE SECRETARY. EMBASSY BELIEVED IT APPROPRIATE TO SUBMIT ITS VIEWS ON THIS MATTER AND DID SO IN TEGUCIGALPA 5746 OF DECEMBER 8, 1977, ALTHOUGH IT WAS ASSUMED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD BY THEN PROBABLY ALREADY MADE A DECISION ON AIRCRAFT NUMBERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE. STATE 311063 OF DECEMBER 31, 1977, INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT THE SECRETARY HAD IN FACT APPROVED AND PM DIRECTOR GELB INFORMED ISRAELIS OF "NO OBJECTIONS" TO GOI TRANSFER TO HONDURAS OF TWO MORE AIRCRAFT, IN ADDITION TO THE EIGHT TRANSFERRED IN 1976 AND THE TWO TRANSFERRED IN MID-LATE 1977.

3. AS A RESULT OF THIS LAST CABLE, MILITARY COMMANDER INFORMED CHIEF

OF HONDURAS' ARMED FORCES, GENERAL POLICARPO PAZ, THAT U.S. HAD
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NO OBJECTIONS TO SALE OF TWO ADDITIONAL SUPER MYSTERES AND THAT THE GOH SHOULD PROVIDE TRANSFER ASSURANCES, TAKING AS A MODEL THE FORMAT USED WITH THE PREVIOUS TWO AIRCRAFT. TEGUCIGALPA 691 OF FEBRUARY 7, 1978, REPORTED GENERAL PAZ' (SOMEWHAT PUZZLED) STATEMENT THAT HONDURAS WAS NOT PROCESSING THE PURCHASE OF TWO ADDITIONAL SUPER MYSTERES.

4. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY HAD ASSUMED THE REQUEST FOR AIRCRAFT NUMBERS ELEVEN AND TWELVE WAS BASED UPON A REQUEST FROM THE GOI, AS NOTED REFTEL. WE HAVE, TO DATE, RECEIVED NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE THAT THE GOH AND GOI ARE DISCUSSING ANOTHER SALE, ALTHOUGH THIS CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. IT ALSO SEEMS UNLIKELY TO US THAT

ARA, PM, NEA AND ACDA PREPARED AN ACTION MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY WITHOUT A FORMAL REQUEST FROM ISRAEL. THE EMBASSY WONDERS IF PERHAPS THE GOI HAS NOT MADE A REQUEST PRIOR TO APPROACHING THE GOH TO OFFER TWO MORE AIRCRAFT, BUT THAT, AS WELL AS OTHER QUESTIONS CONCERNING THESE SALES, CAN BE ANSWERED ONLY IN WASHINGTON.
JARAMILLO

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEGUCI01331
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780118-1091
Format: TEL
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780358/aaaabwup.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a6cea1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 78 TEGUCIGALPA 691
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3299466
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI AIRCRAFT SALES TO HONDURAS
TAGS: PBOR, MASS, HO, ES, IS, OAS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a6cea1c5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014